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FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1699
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 4392
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2204
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2069
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 2640
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2965

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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, EEB
COMMERCE FOR STARKS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OEXC](#) [PREL](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN'S SABIT ALUMNI ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT
EXPERIENCE IN U.S.

¶1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

¶2. (SBU) Alumni of the Special American Business Internship Training (SABIT) program said at a reception held during the visit of U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Europe and Eurasia Paul Dyck on September 29 that they appreciated the exposure to international-level technology and the networking opportunities that they were able to take advantage of as a result of their participation in the SABIT program. One participant mentioned that, due to other Central Asian contacts made during her program, she was able to import cheaper juice concentrate from the region instead of Israel. Another professional from the gas industry said that his SABIT experience enabled him to travel to Ukraine to close a contract -- in effect making him an international businessman. Many SABIT alumni mentioned that they value continuing friendships with others from other former Soviet republics. Participants across the board also found it useful to interact with fellow Central Asians. (COMMENT: Continuing the Soviet tradition, Turkmenistan has maintained since independence a very restrictive visa regime, even with its neighbors. END COMMENT.)

¶3. (SBU) The group agreed that SABIT programs are well-organized and intensive, cramming in many activities in a short period of time. The alumni suggested publicizing future SABIT programs in Turkmenistan's newspapers and via UNDP. One alumnus suggested holding an additional mining program. Finally, alumni enthusiastically welcomed any additional training programs in business and financial management.

¶4. (SBU) COMMENT: SABIT fulfills a great need in Turkmenistan: to expose citizens to places that function differently, allowing them to imagine how life is different in other countries, which thus gives them the ability to envision change. At a time when it is still a challenge to work towards progress in various areas with Turkmenistan, exchange programs -- to the extent that Turkmenistan's citizens are allowed to take part in them -- are at the top of post's most valuable activities. END COMMENT.

15. (U) DAS Dyck has cleared this cable.
CURRAN